

One-Month Voucher Program Women, Infants and Children and Immunization Collaboration

The Utah Immunization Program has been developing methods to increase the up-to-date immunization rates throughout the state. One collaborative approach was piloted in the Tooele County Health Department where the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program and the Utah Immunization Program implemented the WIC One-Month Voucher Program (OMV)* in December 2005 through June 2006.

The overall goal of the One-Month Voucher program is to increase up-to-date immunization rates among WIC participants. Major objectives to achieve this goal included: up-to-date immunization rates among WIC participants will increase by at least 10% by the end of the six-month pilot period; 100% of WIC participants in the OMV program will have an immunization record for each WIC child.

A WIC participant is generally issued vouchers for a three month time frame. These vouchers are used to purchase food and/or formula. Under the One-Month Voucher Program, a WIC participant who lacks an up-to-date immunization record is issued vouchers for a one month time frame. One-month vouchers will continue to be issued until the participant can present an up-to-date immunization record. If a participant chooses, the needed immunizations can be received at the time of visit and then vouchers for the full three month time frame are issued that day. The Tooele Health Department staff tracked the individual participants using a form developed for the One-Month Voucher Program.

Using CDP (Custom Data Processing) and the Utah Statewide Immunization Information System (USIIS), the Tooele Health Department WIC staff determined which clients were overdue for immunizations. For those not up-to-date clients, priority messages were sent to the WIC information system. When a client that had been identified as overdue came into the office, either immunizations were given or a one-month of voucher was given. To facilitate the administration of immunizations, a full-time WIC nurse was hired. This proved to be a vital part of the One-Month Voucher Program. Additionally, the Tooele Health Department has made plans to open up extended hours for immunizations for WIC clients.

Final data for the WIC One-Month Voucher pilot program were collected and processed during the summer of 2006 and presented at the annual Utah State WIC Conference in August of the same year.

**Nationally one month voucher programs have been in place for many years in Chicago, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Florida as examples. These areas believe that this is a big factor in sustaining high infant immunization rates as measured in NIS. New Mexico implemented this as part of their "Done by One" planning efforts.*